

EXAMINING WELLNESS:

Reaching for a better state of mind



EMILY NOYES | NW MISSOURIAN

Colleges work to curb rising mental health concerns

KENDRICK CALFEE
Community News Editor | @KoalaCalfee

MADELINE MAPES
News Reporter | @MadelineDMapes

Mental health and student wellness issues are not unique to the small student population of Northwest but are rather an all-encompassing epidemic that several institutions in the state are working with experts to curb and find viable solutions for.

Northwest is comparable to three Missouri colleges in size and types of wellness services offered: Truman State University, Missouri Western State University and Southeast Missouri State University. Organizations like the American College Health Association are

staffed with mental health experts who seek out and work with these institutions on how to best serve students — and institutions as a whole — in need.

One of the first steps the ACHA and other organizations suggest institutions take is having accessible counseling and wellness services through an array of outreach programs with a focus on support systems.

Wellness leaders on campuses across Missouri like Northwest's Executive Director and Assistant Vice President of Health and Wellness Gerald Wilmes take an open-minded approach to that

SEE WELLNESS | A4

Lack of closure sparks storm of student tweets

MADELINE MAPES
News Reporter | @MadelineDMapes

The University's decision to not close campus Jan. 17, received backlash from many people across campus, despite the University's efforts to keep everyone safe during the bad weather.

A group of officials decided not to close the University because of assessments done throughout the early morning and into the afternoon. This group is composed of the University Police Department, the Provost, Facility Services, Human Resources, Emergency Management, Student Affairs, External Relations and the President's Office for the main campus in town.

The decision-making process separates this group into two teams, with the smaller team usually sending a recommendation to the larger team. Green said a decision was not recommended to the larger team by the smaller team.

The assessments used to decide whether to close the University or not consist of looking at external roads such as the large surround-

ing highways near Maryville and looking at local roads in town and their drivability.

Green said the teams also talk to local counterparts that are involved with the highways and roads to get a good idea of how safe the roads are to travel. Green said the team will also survey their staff and walk the campus to see if the paths are unsafe for students and employees.

Green said the group of officials participate in a conference call with the National Weather Service and discuss what the weather may do as the day goes on. The findings of these assessments led to the final decision to not close the campus, which led to many outraged students.

University Police Chief Clarence Green said about students' concerns about the weather, "We try to be responsive to the individuals who are contacting us."

Senior Noah McBride, @nj_mcbride, tweeted, "@NW_UPD is Northwest Camous not closed? My car is drifted in and there's no way



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Northwest students walked to class after snowfall blanketed campus Jan. 22.

I can walk to classes. Pretty sure most of the Northwest student population is in the same boat."

UPD responded with an illustration of Green thinking about the tweet. The student replied that he fell trying to get into his car.

One car accident was reported in the city limits of Maryville, and Green said only two slip-and-fall reports were made on campus.

In a different Twitter thread, an alumna tweeted about one of the two slip-and-fall reports.

In a message Katy Williams,

@ktscoots said her brother fell near the Ron Houston Center for the Performing Arts. In her original Tweet she said, "hi @NW_UPD I just got a call that my brother fell down on your campus today and broke his elbow. Not so proud to be alumni while y'all are out here putting students in danger trying to get to class."

UPD responded, "Regret your brother was injured. The decision is made by a team that we are own. UPD is not the sole decision maker."

@ktscoots said in the next thread that her brother was to have surgery Friday or Saturday and that hopefully it would help the team shape future decisions.

Friday night, UPD then posted on Twitter, "Based on current road conditions and pending forecast, we are canceling the Safe Ride Late-Night tonight, Friday, January 17, 2020. Make wise decisions this evening, Bearcats!" with a snowflake emoji.

A current student, Katie Barnes replied, "You can't drive us but we had to drive to class?" and a face-palm emoji. UPD tweeted "Point taken!"

What are harmful algae?

A harmful algal bloom is an overgrowth of algae in a water body that could affect water quality and aquatic life.

Cyanobacteria: an especially concerning form of bacteria that comes from HAB's. These blooms can create toxins that are harmful to humans, pets and wildlife.

Causes of Harmful Algae Blooms:

- High Temperatures
- Stagnant Waters
- Abundance of nutrients
- Excess light

How to detect a bloom:

- Odd coloring: blue, green, dark brown streaks in the water
- Excess scum and foam at the shores of waterbeds
- Only professional water testing by departments can truly detect the blooms

When in doubt, stay out (in regards to entering the water)

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

EMILY NOYES | NW MISSOURIAN

KENDRICK CALFEE
Community News Editor | @KoalaCalfee

The city of Maryville, as advised by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, announced direct contact with Mozingo Lake should be avoided due to the potential for cyanotoxins.

Direct contact with water affected by these toxins could cause any of the following health issues: skin, eye, nose and throat respiratory irritation and asthma-like symptoms. Additionally, ingestion of the water could cause gastrointestinal irritation, including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, severe headaches and fevers.

Cyanotoxins are toxins produced by blue-green algae and are common in bodies of water with high concentration of phosphorus. Though no official detections of cyanotoxins have been recorded at Mozingo, conditions of the water are viable for toxin growth. The city has taken a precautionary stance in providing a press release advising against direct contact with the lake and posting signage at various locations at Mozingo.

City Manager Greg McDanel said there are no harmful toxins present at the moment but that the release of a "recreational caution" was encouraged by the Missouri DNR.

"One algae had cells elevated much higher than in the past," McDanel said. "Though no toxins are present now, there was enough potential for them to develop."

The city said in its press release that drinking water supplied in Maryville remains at safe conditions for citizens and meets all rules and regulations provided by the Missouri DNR.

Missouri DNR provides drinking water standards that are evaluated each year to ensure the safety of citizens in the state. The city referenced an informational guide on its press release from the DNR that was updated as of February 2018.

The guide provides information on cyanobacteria, stating, "Cyanobacteria are especially concerning because they are capable of producing toxins that can be harmful, even lethal, to humans, livestock and pets."

Mozingo is at what the Missou-

SEE MOZINGO | A4



IN ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

A8 Open Mic Night

Wellness Services hosts its first Open Mic Night of the spring semester

IN SPORTS

A12 Their best shot

MIAA opponents are throwing everything they have at Northwest men's basketball



IN THE NEWS

A3 Up in smoke

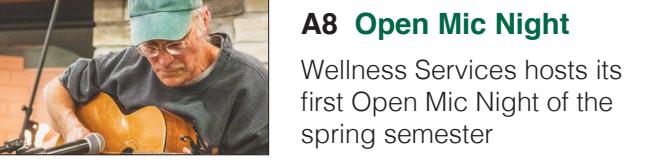
New national law raises minimum purchase age for tobacco products to 21



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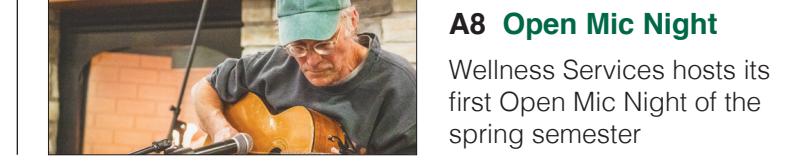
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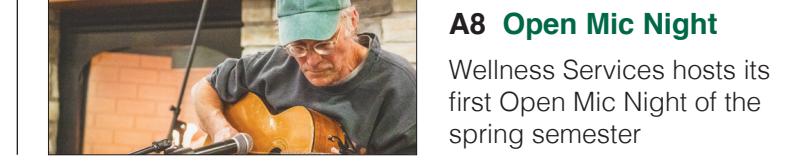
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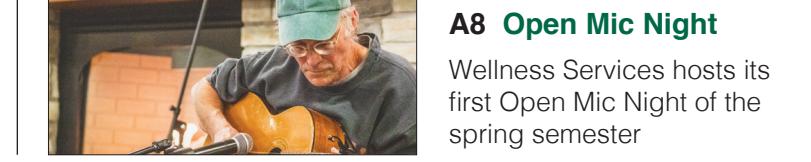
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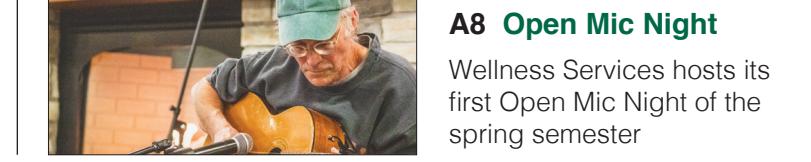
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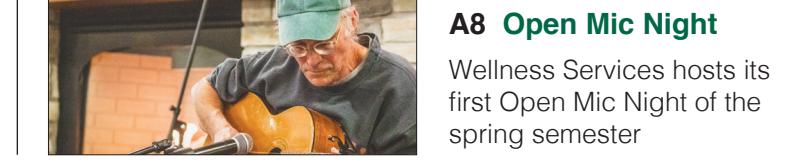
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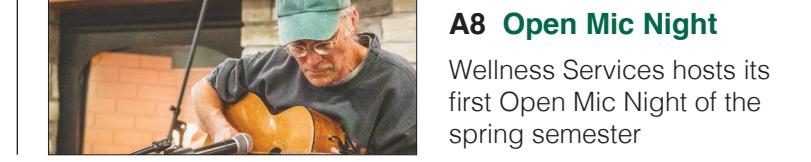
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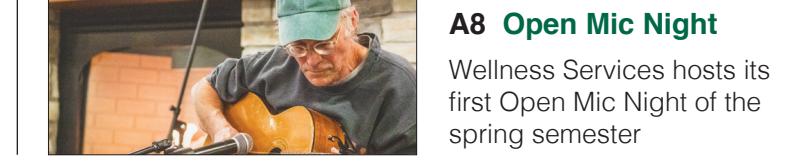
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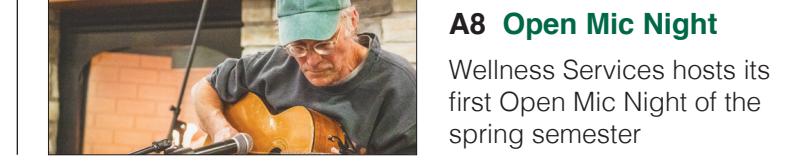
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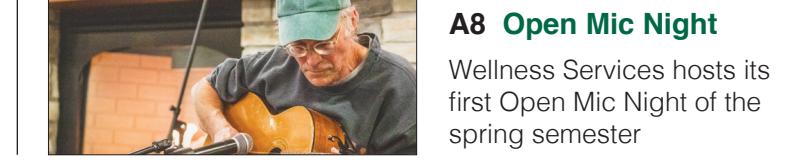
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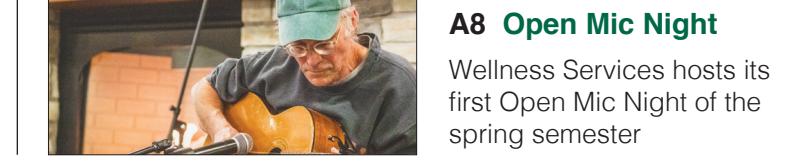
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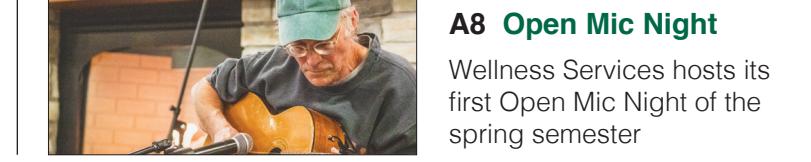
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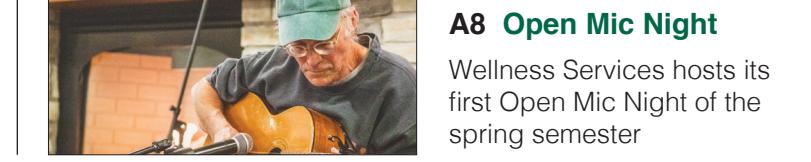
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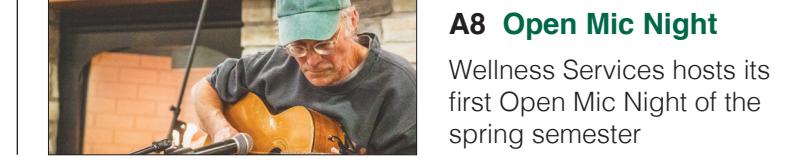
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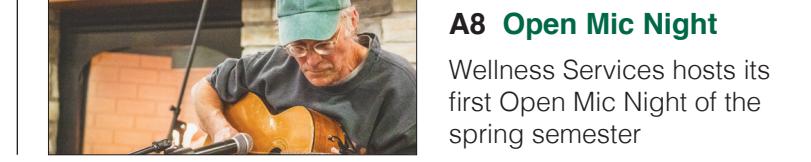
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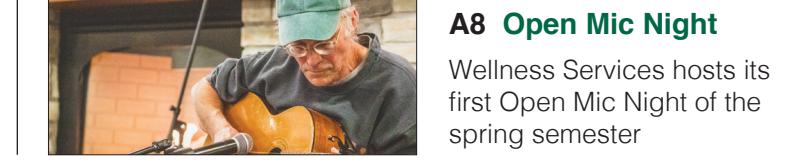
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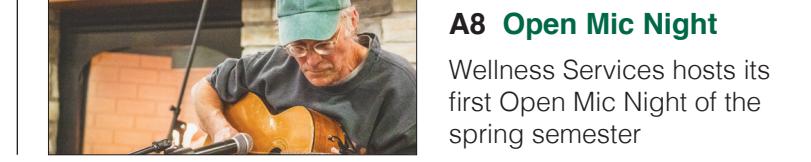
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A new age in tobacco use

Missouri enacts federal law raising minimum age for buying tobacco products to 21

KENDRICK CALFEE
Community News Editor | @KoalaCalfee

A new federal law in the U.S. prohibits the sale of tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21, but city and state adoption of the law is at a momentary halt with lengthy discussion and required local legislative moves.

Missouri, along with all other states and territories under U.S. law, will have a three-year grace period to comply with the federal law and form its own statewide legislation that mirrors the national standard.

In local areas and cities the law is not yet enacted, citizens from the ages of 18-20 who have been purchasing tobacco-related products will still be granted the right to do so.

The Missouri Division of Alcohol and Tobacco Control released a statement Dec. 27 stating, "It is now illegal for any retailer to sell any tobacco product — including cigarettes, cigars and e-cigarettes — to anyone under 21."

President Donald Trump signed the new minimum age into law as a part of a \$1.4 trillion spending bill that was required to pass for prevention of another government shutdown. The bill also included items related to increasing U.S. troops wages, southern border wall funding, repealing a tax on health care plans and the official creation of the U.S. Space Force.

A long-time bipartisan push for the tobacco legislation came from a mix of senators from both sides of the aisle, with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Sen. Mitt Romney leading charge for republicans and Sens. Richard Durbin of Illi-

nois and Tim Kaine of Virginia leading discussions for the democrats.

Trump said in a tweet that the minimum age raise was a key part of the bill he signed in December.

"I will be signing our 738 Billion Dollar Defense Spending Bill today," Trump said in a tweet Dec. 20. "Raises smoking age to 21! BIG!"

CNN reports the passing of raising the legal age to purchase tobacco products as a major public health achievement for the white house, in accordance to a movement known as Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

The state of Missouri as a whole has not yet complied with legislation raising the minimum age to 21, but 27 localities in the state have subsequently enacted laws, seeing motivation by the movement. The closest localities to Maryville that have done so are Kansas City, Missouri Lee's Summit, Missouri and Liberty, Missouri.

As of December, 19 states have individually passed legislation that raised the tobacco purchasing age to 21. These states include: Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and Washington.

Washington D.C., and at least 540 localities across the U.S., have raised the minimum age which means these laws now preside over more than half of the U.S. population.

The Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids website offers statistics on tobacco use and information on how the movement began. It lists individual statistics for each state and the influence of tobacco in that state.



DAKOTA WEAVER | PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

According to The Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, 10.9% of high school students in Missouri use electronic cigarettes. A new federal law now prohibits selling tobacco to anyone under 21.

The website shows that 9.2% of high school aged students in Missouri smoke and that 10.9% of high school students use e-cigarettes or vape. They also list death toll from smoking related illness, where in Missouri 11,000 adults die each

year from their own smoking.

These statistics have been what legislators local and nationally have cited as a way to push prohibition of these products.

Until the state divisions of Alcohol and Tobacco control receive guidance

from federal institutions, those departments will continue to enforce the 18 year age restriction set by state laws.

The Missouri DATC will release more information as legislative moves are made by the state to follow national standards.

Peace brunch hosts family court commissioner

LIZ SWAFFORD
News Reporter | @lizswafford3

Northwest held its Ninth Annual Peace Brunch on campus for Martin Luther King Jr. Day at 11 a.m. Jan. 20 in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom.

Before the Peace Brunch, a series of service events were held all around Maryville. Mallett said they were open to everyone, and they wanted to start this day with service.

The four locations they had were Oak Pointe, Lettuce Dream, Children and Family Center and Parkdale Manor. They are doing lots of different things at different sights.

One of the locations, the Children and Family Center, was having its volunteers scrape ice and clean. Volunteer Coordinator at the Children and Family Center Julia Day said she received an email about having people come to volunteer.

"Our volunteers are so important and crucial to us; they help us make this environment warm and welcoming to our clients who have nowhere else to go," Day said.



Commissioner Anne-Marie Clarke was the keynote speaker at the Ninth Annual Peace Brunch for Martin Luther King Jr. Day Jan. 20 in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom.

Day said this was her first year coordinating volunteering, but the Children and Family Center has been par-

ticipating in the MLK Day service projects the last couple of years.

"I love this idea of taking action and

volunteering on MLK Day," Day said.

At the Peace Brunch, Commissioner Anne-Marie Clarke spoke as the keynote speaker.

Clarke graduated in just two years from Northwest with a degree in political science in 1970. She then moved back to St. Louis, Missouri, to attend law school and became a family court commissioner.

She spoke about her time at Northwest and the importance of diversity and inclusion on a college campus.

"Two years after Dr. King's death, this was a time when across the United States riots broke out and tensions were high," Clarke said. "Yet, here at Northwest Missouri State, black and white students came together to create the Organization of Interracial Understanding."

Throughout MLK Week, Northwest's multicultural organizations are hosting events on campus.

Director of Diversity and Inclusion Dr. Justin Mallett said that MLK Week is a celebration of events for students to enjoy.

On Tuesday, the Black Student Union is doing a CPR training. On Wednesday, the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. is doing a toiletry drive followed by a movie night hosted by the Minority Men Association. On Thursday, S.I.S.T.A.H. will be hosting a trivia night event.

Mallett said he was pleased with this event because he saw the reconnection of previous Bearcats and Northwest's current community.

"We're bringing back some of our alums that got disconnected from Northwest, and we want them to come back to get engaged and make an impact," Mallett said.

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Religious rehab center to open

LIZ SWAFFORD
News Reporter | @lizswafford3

Rebecca Wyant, a community member, is turning The Bridge East into a rehabilitation center for drug and alcohol addiction based on Christian ideals, the program will be called Arch of Freedom.

The Bridge, a local church, sold its east campus building to Wyant Nov. 29, 2019.

Chad Mayne, pastor for The Bridge, said the east campus wasn't being used anymore by the different groups that attended The Bridge, so they had no reason to keep it.

"It wasn't really active as far as having services. This (The Bridge main campus) has been our main location since 2013," Mayne said.

The only use of the building was for youth services, but even the youth group found themselves using the main campus more.

Mayne said that working to fix a building that the church wasn't using wasn't something they were looking to do.

"The building itself is older, and we were putting repairs into it when it wasn't being used, so we decided to sell it," Mayne said.

Wyant said because of her family's history in drug and alcohol abuse, she was led to the decision to open this center.

"One of my family members went to something similar in Des Moines, Iowa, called Hope Ministries. Their recovery is completely Christ-based," Wyant said. "One of the things we found missing in our community was Christ-centered sup-

port for people fighting addictions."

Wyant said that they are working to become a nonprofit, but the paperwork and approval is a long process.

"Right now, it's just myself paying for the building and utilities. So, anything to expand it beyond what we can use the building as is, without major improvements, is what we're trying to do," Wyant said.

Maryville already has two other rehabilitation services to offer. New Beginnings is an outpatient rehabilitation center. According to their website, they offer counseling sessions, individual classes and group sessions. Family Guidance, according to their website, is a program that assists families dealing with mental illness and helps them return to an independent lifestyle.

Wyant said this isn't something that is going to take the place of what Maryville already has to offer but that her service will offer more of a Christ-based recovery.

"We don't want to replace what our community already has. We'll work with New Beginnings and Family Guidance and the hospital. It's just to fill that gap of the spiritual healing," Wyant said.

Wyant said the program will work closely with the churches in the area so the people in the program are able to find their own path.

"We would like to touch base with all of our surrounding churches because one of the fears that a lot of the people that go through these programs is that they think they're being judged if they go to a church," Wyant said. "To have different ministry to come in to get people ac-



MADI GLASS | NW MISSOURIAN

Rebecca Wyant purchased the Bridge East campus and will turn it into a rehabilitation center for drug and alcohol addiction. Wyant will be working closely with churches in the community to help provide Christ-based recovery.

quainted with the different churches in town is one of our missions."

Wyant said eventually they want to turn the recovery center into a place for housing, but that's pretty

far into the future.

"The first phase would be counseling, having pastors from surrounding areas come in and maybe even do some services," Wyant said. "Long

term, we would like to become residential, but that would take a lot of funding and improvements to the building that just aren't there yet."

Campus to host diversity leadership conference

SAMANTHA COLLISON
Campus News Editor | @SammieCollison

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion will host the first Diversity Leadership Conference Feb. 22 on the third floor of the J.W. Jones Student Union, which is available and free to attend for all Northwest students.

Associate Provost of Diversity and Inclusion Justin Mallett said while there are some diversity and inclusion-related trainings and conferences in the region, there are none available to all Northwest students. The conference is also open to faculty and staff for a \$20 fee.

Mallett said the overarching goal of the conference is to start the process of developing founda-

tional knowledge about diversity and inclusion.

"Diversity and inclusion isn't just about race and ethnicity," Mallett said. "We wanted the students to see all the components related to diversity and inclusion, whether it's nationality, whether it's sexuality, whether it's cultural, whether it's gender."

The breakout sessions will be hosted by Northwest employees, including History Associate Professor Elyssa Ford's session about women's suffrage, Health Sciences Associate Professor Jackie Kibler's session about burnout and Director of Partnerships and Placement Jill Brown's session about social media.

In addition to the diversity and

inclusion staff, the conference is being organized by a committee of faculty and staff including the workshop leaders, Health Sciences Instructor Sarah Creason, Faculty Senate President Jenny Rytting and Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Kori Hoffmann.

Mallett said the conference is an opportunity for workshop leaders and organizers as much as attendees.

"Really, truthfully, all of our presenters should be faculty and staff that are here," Mallett said. "It gives them a chance to gain experience doing presentations at conferences; it'll help them in their tenure process."

Dinner is provided as part of the conference, followed by a keynote address from Georgetown University Sociology Professor Micheal

Eric Dyson.

While there is a fee for University employees to attend, Geography Professor Mark Corson has offered to pay for any faculty in his department to attend, and the B.D. Owens Library is paying for its staff to attend the conference.

Corson said both his upbringing in San Francisco, which he described as a true cultural melting pot, and his 31 years in the Army, part of which was spent in the Middle East, have led him to see a need for diversity education.

"I am a political geographer by trade, and I understand that for a country to stay together it must have two things: a reason for being and forces that bring people together must overcome forces that tear them apart," Corson said in an

email. "I firmly believe Americans must either embrace diversity to make us stronger, or our future as a country is at risk."

Corson said he encourages other unit leaders to pay for their colleagues to attend the conference.

The conference is only available to Northwest students and employees this year, but Mallett said he hopes for it to become the top diversity conference in the region.

"Even high school students should be coming; the teachers within Nodaway County in those school districts should be coming to get these sessions," Mallett said.

"It should also turn into a professional development for people in professional positions. That's my big dream."

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POLICE BLOTTERS

for the week of Jan. 23

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

Jan. 15

There was a closed investigation for a liquor law violation at Dieterich Hall.

A summons was issued to **Antonia Hallman**, 19, and Lane M. Liam, 19, for possession of marijuana at Dieterich Hall.

Jan. 17

There was a closed investigation for two liquor law violations at Perrin Hall.

Jan. 18

Sean Flanagan, 18, was placed on a detox for a liquor law violation at Dieterich Hall.

Jan. 19

A summons was issued to **Anthony Pina**, 18, for driving while suspended.

A summons was issued to **Nicole Still**, 45, of Bedford, Iowa, for driving while impaired on College Avenue.

Maryville Department of Public Safety

Jan. 12

There is an ongoing investigation for fraud on the 600 block of West Halsey Street.

Jan. 15

A summons was issued to **Jeremiah L. Holmes**, 22, for wanted on warrant and failure to appear on the 400 block of North Market Street.

Jan. 16

A summons was issued to **Zachary P. Lawrence**, 18, for possession of a fake I.D. on the 1500 block of North Main Street.

WELLNESS

CONTINUED FROM A1

Wilmes, not a mental health professional, but rather a primary care doctor with mental health training, serves on the Wellness event team and leads in case management at the Wellness Center.

"Benchmarking with (other schools), ... we're probably in a better place," Wilmes said. "A big part of this is the integration of clinical and mental."

One competitor, Truman State University, located in Kirksville, Missouri, has an undergraduate population of 4,939 students who are offered a Student Health Center and counseling services, located in two different buildings.

The university provides an after-hours number for those in immediate need and also have the national suicide prevention hotline, 800-273-8255, posted on its website. The Health Center and counseling are open weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and again from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Much like Northwest and other institutions, Truman State offers a variety of workshops directed toward building support systems for students. However, Truman State goes about stress-busters in a completely unique way.

On the first floor of Pickler Memorial Library on Truman State's campus, there is an area known as the "Wellness Zone" where students are provided massage chairs, coloring, games and puzzles to build one's mind up with what the Truman website calls a "healthy outlet."

"The Wellness Zone provides a stress-free environment on campus where students and faculty/staff can relax and practice stress management techniques," the Truman website states.

Studies and reports conducted by ACHA show that when institutions take steps like Truman State has with the Wellness Zone, students feel more comfortable reaching out for services.

The ACHA conducts a yearly self-reported survey of close to 95,000 college students from universities across the nation, gathering general information about student health and mental health.

The reports found that visits to university counseling centers rose 42% between 1992 and 2002 at 11 midwestern institutions. The stud-

ies also found, for the past 10 years, close to 90% of counseling center directors say they are treating an increasing number of students with severe pathology.

Since experts say trends in mental health are only increasing exponentially on college campuses, the need for accessible support systems are mirroring that issue.

Institutions similar in size to Northwest now commonly receive suicide prevention grants from experts in organizations that help the school afford mental health programs.

Northwest was awarded a \$306,000 grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in 2018, which still goes toward several programs, prevention and outreach.

The grant went toward funding a new suicide prevention program and its coordinator for three years, a position that Kristen Peltz, assistant director of wellness services, filled.

"We know that we are in a critical place with students and their psychological and emotional well-being," Peltz said in a 2018 news release from the University. "The more we can be proactive, the more upstream we are and implementing programming and interventions, then hopefully we can make a difference."

Wilmes, Peltz and the rest of the case management team at Wellness Services meet every week to discuss concerns the office may have.

Wilmes said the suicide prevention grant, now sparing only one year of funding for the program is a topic of discussion.

"It used to be you couldn't get (the grant) if you've ever got it before," Wilmes said. "As part of the grant, we realized several programs, including TAO (Therapy Assistance Online), ... where students can receive helpful feedback."

Another university wellness program funded in part by suicide prevention grants is Missouri Western State University.

According to collegetuition-compare.com, 5,343 undergraduate students were enrolled at Missouri Western for the 2018-19 school year.

Missouri Western does not have an integrated wellness facility like Northwest. Missouri Western has a separate Counseling Center located in Eder Hall, while their Health Center, which takes care of students' physical health needs, is located in Blum Union.

On the Counseling Center's website, students can find the facility's phone number or they can click on the staff directory to email a specific staff member in the Counseling Center.

Missouri Western's Counseling Center has a few services that are different from Northwest's. On their website, students have access to a 20 page booklet, "The Distressed Student Booklet." The booklet contains a description of various mental health conditions along with their symptoms.

Missouri Western also provides a brochure for students called, the "Counseling Center Brochure." The brochure covers what mental health conditions the Counseling Center services address. It also states when and how students can make appointments.

On Missouri Western's Counseling Center website, there is also a link to Missouri's higher education substance abuse consortium. This link addresses various substance abuses so students can find other resources off campus to get the necessary help that they need.

Southeast Missouri State University is another University that is comparable to Northwest. According to a three-year enrollment report, Southeast has 7,723 students enrolled as undergraduates.

Janice Ruesler, the director of counseling and disability services at Southeast, said in an email, 1,440 students utilize their counseling services, which is around 14% of their student body.

According to Southeast's Counseling Services website, the counseling services are integrated with their Disability Services. These two services are based in Crisp Hall of the Southeast campus. The Campus Health Clinic is also located in Crisp Hall but is on a different floor.

Unlike Northwest, students who do not show up for appointments they have scheduled or do not give 24-hour notice are fined \$25.

Wilmes said there is no definite way to solve the mental health epidemic. His point can be exemplified in that Northwest, Missouri Western, Truman State and Southeast all have different approaches to aiding students in need of counseling and other wellness services.

Northwest pays for their services with an Operational Budget, which contains a Designated Fee that all students pay.

MOZINGO

CONTINUED FROM A1

Public Works Director C.E. Goodall said the immediate need is replacement of the filtration system membranes, which generally have a life expectancy of seven years. The membranes stretch and are malleable in the filtration process, but after time, they become faulty and need to be replaced.

Goodall says Public Works is fortunate for the membrane they are using now, which is in its ninth year of use — two years beyond the regular limit.

"We've done really well this time getting a little extra out of it than what they tell us we can," Goodall said at the Jan. 13 city council meeting. "This time of year is when we see the biggest issues though. We are hoping to get (the new membranes) in there this summer so the order should be completed this spring."

Public Works began the bidding process with the only company in the area that can supply the parts. A downpayment of \$452,506, or 25% of the overall \$1.8 million order, will be paid with the approval of the city council.

The water systems are in fair running conditions, but Public Works has reached out to several sources to troubleshoot and learn how they can improve the water system.

Goodall said he has reached out to the University of Missouri extension, located in the city administration building, and has given them the information they will take to biologists at Mizzou who will take an in depth look at the problems that arise.

The city provided the same information to local engineers who will look at what additional improvements can be made on the logistical side of running the water facility.

"We've just had no luck with the treatments in the lake as far as killing off that algae like we did two years ago," Goodall said. "It's kind of got a resistance to it this year; I don't know what it is."

Goodall said the Missouri DNR will continue to run tests until the algae count decreases, and he ensures citizens that the water exceeds standards set by state regulations. When test results are once again acceptable at the lake, warning signage will be removed.

Icy storms challenge Maryville road crew

LIZ SWAFFORD
News Reporter | @lizswafford3

Maryville roads have become tough to drive on due to winter weather conditions. The icy conditions have caused accidents in the area.

This winter, Maryville has been hit with a series of icy storms that make driving through town difficult. The road conditions are predicted to be harsh with the upcoming storms.

According to the Missouri State Highway Patrol, an accident occurred Jan. 11 on highway 148 due to the icy roads. The driver received moderate injuries.

Public Works Director C.E. Goodall said this year seems to be pretty mild compared to last winter, the last couple storms have hit pretty hard.

"This last little ice incident was a little bit to deal with. It's put a bit of a dent in our supply," Goodall said.

The city had to use almost 100 tons of salt and ice treatment in order to treat the roads during the last storm.

Goodall said that in order to be prepared for the winter, the city has to order its products before winter hits. He said the city tries to stock up as much as possible so it's ready for every outcome.

"Last year we were unable to completely stock up because we used so much product on all those small ice incidents. We were pretty well stocked when the season started, but we weren't completely stocked," Goodall said. "But we try to go ahead and get completely full and then replenish them as we use them."

The city of Maryville is only responsible for the roads in the city, excluding everything on campus. The process is to do the emergency routes first. Side streets aren't treated unless there is three inches of snow, and alleys are not high in importance, even though they might be the only way to get to some buildings.

Goodall said that they work with citizens as best as they can, but they can't get everything right away.



Harsh winters can cause damage to the roads throughout Maryville, leaving potholes ranging in various sizes. Emergency routes are cleared first, and side streets aren't treated unless there are three inches of snow, leaving many streets to be uncleared.

"We try to accommodate when we can; it's not always something we can run straight out and get to," Goodall said. "We do have a lot of alleys that are accesses to places, and alleys are the last thing on our list to do, so they are kind of as needed."

Maryville Street Superintendent Jay Cacek said that him and his team of seven work to clear the roads but can't always get every-

thing just as everyone wants.

"When you clean off the road, you take one side of the street one way and one side of it the other, and then the snow goes across the driveway," Cacek said. "You get a lot of people that get mad about that, but there's nothing we can do about that."

The city receives plenty of complaints from citizens and it tries to accommodate as much as possible.

ies also found, for the past 10 years, close to 90% of counseling center directors say they are treating an increasing number of students with severe pathology.

Since experts say trends in mental health are only increasing exponentially on college campuses, the need for accessible support systems are mirroring that issue.

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Tobacco law good for student health

NATHAN ENGLISH
Columnist
@ThananEnglish



The legal age to buy tobacco products should be 21. The new law, dubbed "Tobacco 21", is more than just government hampering youth expression, it is a common-sense regulation meant to curb a health crisis that has taken hold in America.

Alcohol has been labeled a substance that is dangerous for teens, and tobacco, with its numerous addictive issues and adverse health effects, should be right up there with it.

The FDA raised the minimum age to buy tobacco from 18 to 21 as part of a major spending package that also includes money for a border wall and gun violence research.

One of the main goals this regulation hopes to achieve is a reduction in the use of tobacco in schools and those under 18. Up until "Tobacco 21," most seniors at some point in high school were able to legally buy tobacco.

Tobacco use is already banned in Missouri public schools, but it is much more difficult to ban a substance that some students can legally purchase at every Casey's in a 20-mile radius, which if you're in Missouri is at least six Casey's.

Personally, as a person that has had to step around cigarette butts and chew cans on my way to my car in high school, clearly the ban wasn't effective. The quarter of the students who were of age to spit and smoke to their heart's content would act as suppliers for younger students who "needed" that tobacco fix but couldn't buy it themselves.

It creates a cycle of addiction that can start in people even as young as middle schoolers. This problem has only worsened with the introduction of electronic cigarettes and vapes.

The use of e-cigarettes in middle school and high school rose from 3.6 million to 5.4 million from 2018-2019, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC estimates 1 in every 4 high schoolers regularly used e-cigarettes in 2019.

People addicted to tobacco normally start the addiction before the age of 18, according to the CDC. Around 90% of cigarette smokers try their first cigarette before the age of 18.

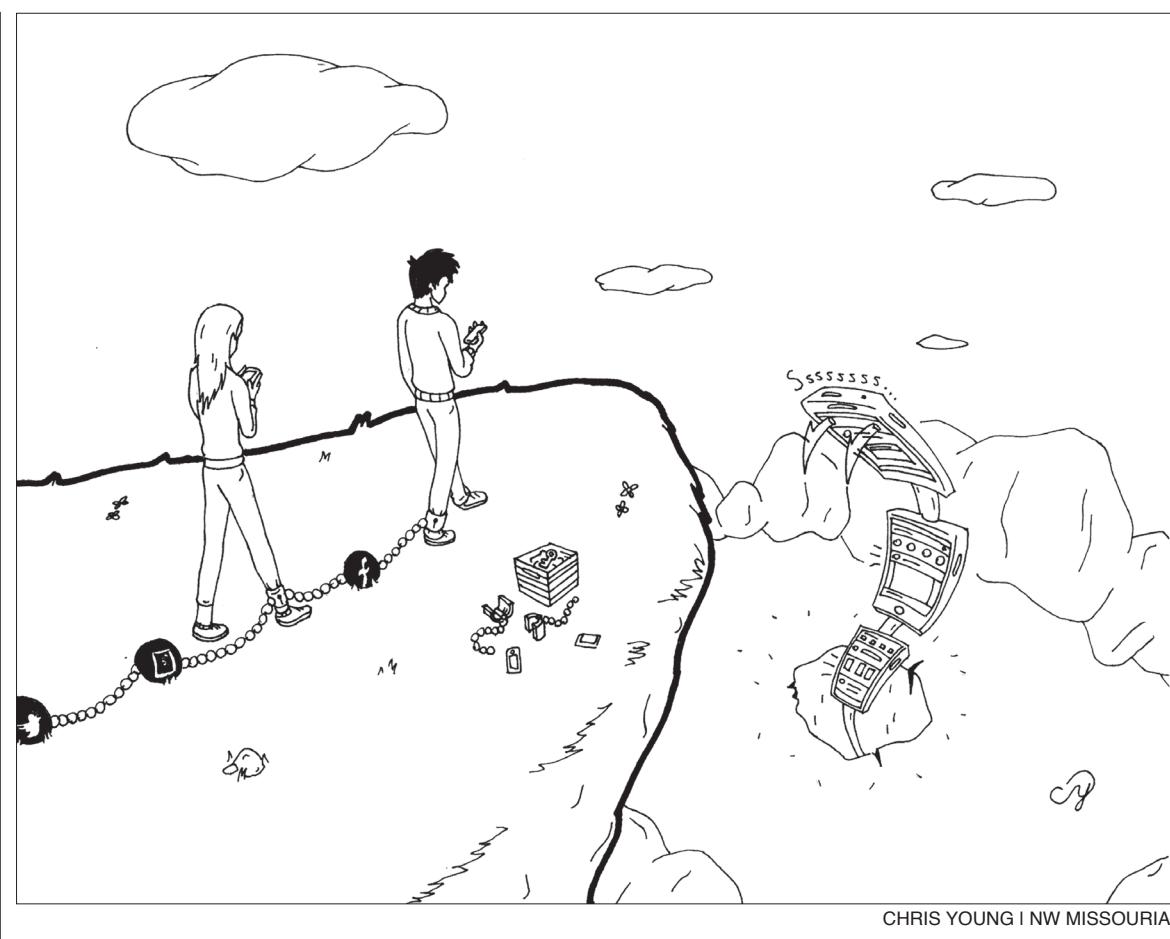
Basic biology also shows that teens have a higher chance of becoming addicted to nicotine in tobacco products than adults.

People below the age of 21 are more vulnerable to developing issues with tobacco, and it makes logical sense to make it more difficult for teens to acquire them.

Tobacco taxes and mostly cigarette taxes are designed to act as a deterrent for those willing to buy tobacco products. Particularly, teens and those in college who do not have that much disposable income are supposed to be deterred by increasing prices.

That would work if the taxes in Missouri weren't ranked 51st in the United States, according to Truth Initiative. Yes, 51st is correct because Washington, D.C., is included in this. That means that the deterrent, and state revenue generator, is particularly weak in Missouri.

The myriad of issues that accompany tobacco and the chances of someone developing a lifelong addiction is more than enough incentive to raise the age and possibly protect young people. It won't stop youth tobacco use and nicotine addiction, but it may lessen its impact and that alone is worth it.



OUR VIEW:

Users shouldn't overvalue metrics on social media

Somehow, in the midst of complaining about never having enough time or not getting eight hours of sleep, we've found the time to use social media for two hours a day.

Two hours is a little generous too. In 2018, the average person spent 136 minutes per day on social media — a figure that has consistently risen each year, according to Statista.

We spend more time seeing how many likes we got, how many followers we've gained, how many views our stories have than we spend caring about who actually liked the photo and who wants to follow your account. We focus on the quantifications more-so than actual connections.

If we're not guilty of it ourselves, we've all witnessed the quantification of social media in our lives. It's in your friend announcing to a room full of people that they've just posted on Instagram, insinuating you all should go like it. It's that feeling of validation you get when your selfie has reached its peak number of likes or when an influencer follows you back. It's another user's high follower count influencing your perception of their post. And it's in that moment when you decide a tweet with 10,000 retweets is somehow more valuable than one with 10.

We've let social media metrics determine what we write, what we delete, what we post, who we follow and what's cool.

But, are the negative effects of social

media worth it? 72% percent of us think so, using social media on a daily basis. At least, we're enabling that behavior by using it everyday.

Now, going without social media is a bold choice in today's technology-driven society. A recent study observed University of Pennsylvania students' social media usage for four weeks and had an experimental group limited to 10 minutes on each social media platform per day and a control group with no restrictions.

The study found that both groups reported a decrease in anxiety and fear of missing out; even the group that used social media however it willed. Being conscious of social media usage alone leads to healthier usage, the study suggests.

Going cold turkey on social media isn't a reality most of us can go with. It's been ingrained in our way of living since we were kids. But we need to check our habits. Social media shouldn't make us feel bad. It shouldn't make you feel like you're missing out.

Social media is supposed to be about connecting, not comparing. We've somehow lost sight of that in our need to feel important.

Next time you're scrolling through all your social media timelines, just keep in mind that social media is a highlight reel — remember that.

How does Instagram make you feel?



"Motivated. Just 'cause I follow a lot of pages that resemble things that I do in my daily life, and so I see people doing these amazing things and it kind of motivates me to keep going every day and do the things I do."

- Kevin Nguyen | Sophomore
Criminology



"It doesn't, like — I don't know. It's just something to do in my free time. I don't really, like, feel good about it, I guess, you know? It's just something to do."

- Samantha Fortik | Sophomore
Math Education



"I like it. I use it mainly for just, like, mindless scrolling, so to me it doesn't really have a concrete value or do a disservice to me. And I would say that I regulate myself enough that it doesn't produce any kind of feeling of being left out."

- Garrison Kennedy | Freshman
Undecided

Numerous forms of distracted driving cause accidents, should be avoided

KAITLIN GRAHAM
Opinion Columnist
@TheMissourian



There were 3,477 distracted driving deaths in 2015, according to the CDC. Distracted driving is a major problem on the roads today. Despite this, most people are guilty of driving distracted at least a few times in their lives.

Distracted driving can range anywhere from adjusting the radio to the extreme of watching videos on your phone. It's very unsafe and shouldn't be practiced by anyone.

Although these numbers are staggering, a lot of people still believe that distracted driving isn't a big deal. It has become a normal part of society.

People think that since they have never gotten a ticket or caused an accident from driving distracted, then it isn't a problem. This is not the case.

Everyday, at least nine people are

killed due to a distracted driver, according to the DMV's official website.

Even though someone hasn't been personally impacted by distracted driving yet, it is bound to happen someday. On average, more than 1,000 people are injured daily in accidents due to a distracted driver, according to Zebra, an auto insurance company.

On average, a driver's mind can be taken off the road and result in an accident in just three seconds, according to Distracted Driver Accidents, a website that shares statistics on distracted driving accidents.

To avoid the problem, people should either put their phone on Do Not Disturb mode or in the glovebox before getting out on the road.

Even though texting and driving is one of the biggest causes of accidents, causing 25% of all fatal crashes, according to a website that gives tips to help keep teen drivers safe, Teen Safe, one mistake people make when thinking about distracted driving is that it just means texting and talking on the phone. While that is one

form, there are actually quite a few different forms of distracted driving.

Anytime you aren't driving alone there is the potential to become distracted by the person or people that you are driving with.

It's easy for a student to lose focus on what's in front of them when friends are cracking jokes in the back seat. People need to be careful and make sure that their friends won't become a distraction before driving them anywhere.

Another form of distracted driving is adjusting the controls in your car, like the temperature or radio. This is something small, so most people don't think about it, but it still matters.

Being distracted on the road could ruin the driver's life or someone else's, so it should be a major concern in everyone's life.

In this day and age, people will always have distractions while driving, but they can limit them to a large extent. In order to prevent accidents, people should be diligent in ignoring distractions while driving.

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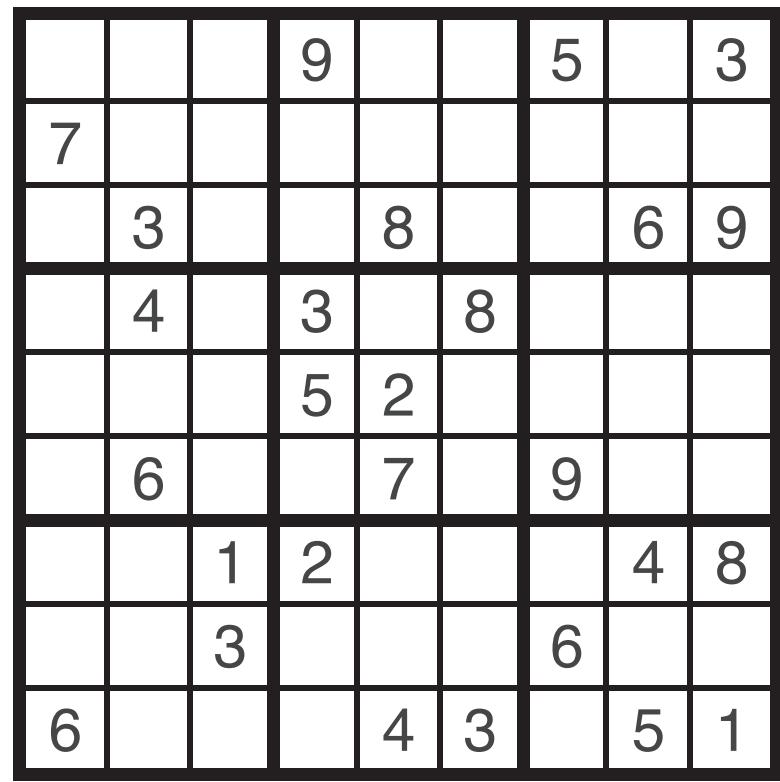
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80

SUDOKU

By MetroCreative



HOROSCOPE

By MetroCreative

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

The stars pull you deeper into the cocoon of your mind, Aries. This may help you as you work on a project or work through thoughts and emotions.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

This is a week to take inventory of any goals that you may have put on a shelf, Taurus. Dust them off and create a plan of action because the time to pursue them is now.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

Gemini, an ambitious week is on the horizon. Your professional house is booming, and you are ready to perhaps move your career to the next level.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

This week will get off to a social start, Cancer. Expect friends to bring other friends along if you are hosting a party. This is an exciting opportunity to expand your network.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, put all of your cards on the table and begin discussions with others who are influencers in your life. Only then can you come up with a strategy to get things done.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Make a point of being direct if you are upset, Virgo. Others need to know if they have stepped on your toes, even if it was accidental so they can make things right.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Now is a key time to boost your bottom line, Libra. If you don't already have a job, it's time to get one. If you're employed, you may need to seek out new revenue streams.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Various ideas are swirling around in your head, Scorpio. You're not sure which ones you want to see the light of day just yet. Partner up on a trial project first.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, if stress has been ruling your universe, it might be time to step back and re-evaluate your priorities. Find out which tasks you can shed from your daily list.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Deep soul-searching and a sharing of hidden emotions might be on the docket this week, Capricorn. It is brave to own up to your feelings. You'll find support in friends.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

A deep cleaning or decluttering is in order, Aquarius. Start with one room in the house and then work your way onward as time permits. Decluttering can be liberating.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

You may soon encounter some awkward moments with some people you interact with regularly, Pisces. This will blow over quite quickly.

Winter in Maryville



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN



CROSSWORD

By MetroCreative

CLUES ACROSS

1. Indicates number of days
6. When you hope to get there
9. Hairstyle
13. Black (Spanish)
14. Expresses pleasure
15. Away from wind
16. Tech pros organization
17. Wile E. Coyote is familiar with it
18. Clean
19. Saints' signal caller
21. A way to hunt
22. Poetries
23. Automobile
24. Secondary school (abbr.)
25. Indicates before
28. Male parent
29. Short-billed rails
31. It pays to keep yours
33. On occasion
36. David ___, US playwright
38. Slang for cigarette
39. Vaccine developer
41. Returned to health
44. Toni Morrison novel
45. Period between eclipses
46. Veterans battleground
48. Gang
49. A radio band
51. Jaws of a voracious animal
52. Elaborate garments
54. Chinese province
56. Checks
60. Horizontal passage
61. Steep hillsides
62. Fertility god
63. Dried-up
64. Signs a name
65. __ Winger, actress
66. German river
67. Gov't lawyers
68. Take something somewhere

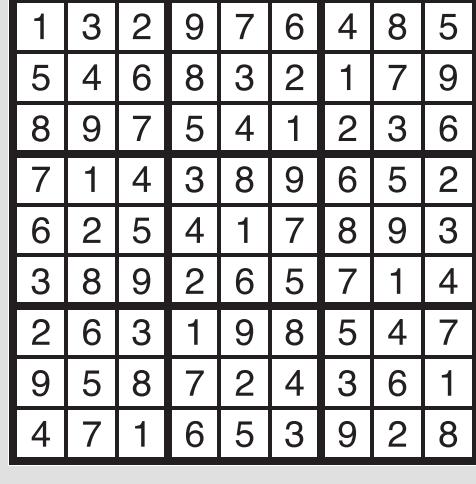
3. "The African Queen" writer
4. Crater on the moon
5. Toward
6. Overhang
7. Identifies something close at hand
8. Sign language
9. Unbroken views
10. Ancient Greek City
11. Stretch out to grasp
12. Alcohols that are unfit for drinking
14. Humorous stories
17. Long song for a solo
20. Barrels per day (abbr.)
21. City of Lights
23. A place to sleep
25. Advanced degree (abbr.)
26. The back
27. Furniture-makers Charles and "Ray"
29. Songs to a lover

30. Gland secretion
32. 10 meters
34. Disfigure
35. Stores grain
37. Sacred book of Judaism
40. Catch
42. Promise
43. Challenges
47. Russian space station
49. Banking giant
50. Served as an omen
52. Drenches
53. Type of sword
55. Minor planet
56. Messenger ribonucleic acid
57. Japanese ankle sock
58. Obtain in return for services
59. Waste matter
61. A proposal to buy at a specified price
65. Unit of loudness

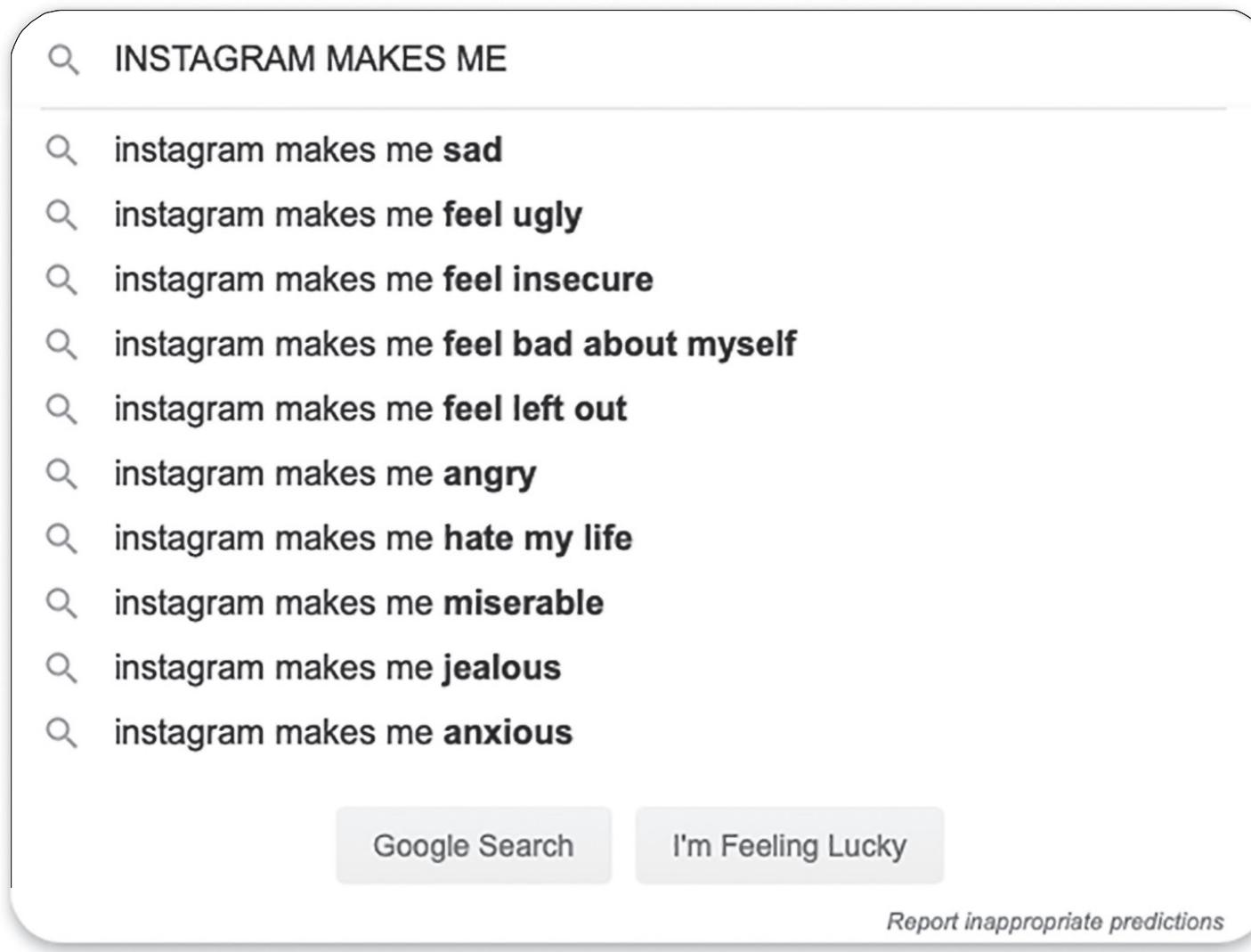
CLUES DOWN

1. __ Blyton, children's author
2. Colleague

Last Week's Solutions



Google



A screenshot of suggested Google searches for the phrase “Instagram makes me...” from November 2019. Results are based off of popular searches.

In an effort to depressurize platform, Instagram pilots hiding likes from users

RACHEL ADAMSON
Editor-in-Chief | @rachadamsonn

What's a good follower to following ratio? When is the best time of the day to post on Instagram? Selfies generally get more likes. What's a good follower to like ratio on Instagram? Deleting posts that underperform.

On social media networks, value is quantifiable. The worth of a picture, a selfie, a meme found in metrics like followers, likes, comments, views.

Majority of social media networks put numbers front and center. And it's on purpose. It's good for business. The urge to check on how a post is doing drives users back to the site, increasing user engagement.

But these metrics have been brought into question for the effect it has on users' mental health. Social media sites' focus on quantity leads to continually measuring the value of social connections within metric terms.

This has led to sites like Instagram, a photo and video sharing social network, toying with the idea of private likes in the U.S. Instagram has already hidden likes on posts in Canada, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Brazil, Australia and New Zealand. Users are still able to see likes on their personal accounts but not on other users' accounts.

Head of Instagram Adam Mosseri announced the decision to test private likes in an interview with *Wired* in November 2019, a week before its launch. Private like counts is a part of Instagram's attempt at becoming a safer place on the Internet, along with honing down on offensive comments, bullying and enforcing community guidelines.

“It's about young people. The idea is to depressurize Instagram,” Mosseri said in the announcement. “Make it less of a competition. Give people the space to connect with the people that they love, things that inspire them.”

Northwest senior Caitlyn Bland has been an Instagram user since her junior year of high school. She

doesn't even remember why she got it but said it's probably because everyone had it. It was the cool thing to do.

Since its launch Oct. 6, 2010, Instagram has turned into the sixth most popular social network worldwide — third in the U.S. — with over 1 billion active monthly users and over 500 million active daily story users.

stalled Instagram from her phone. She kept Instagram uninstalled for about a month.

“There's positives. There's a lot of art accounts and motivational speakers that I follow that I feel like they post encouraging things,” Bland said. “That's not causing me to have issues with negative self talk. There's also negatives, so it's trying to find a balance of use.”

A recent study found that limiting time on social media has significant impact on overall well-being. The study monitored 143 undergraduate students at the University of Pennsylvania. The students were split into two groups — one to use social media per usual and the other to limit each social media platform to 10 minutes per day for four weeks.

“Not comparing my life to the lives of others had a much stronger impact than I expected, and I felt a lot more positive about myself during those weeks,” a participant in the 10-minute limit group study said. “I feel overall that social media is less important and I value it less than I did prior to the study.”

With Instagram comes the pressure to produce perfect pictures and curate an aesthetic feed. The platform intended to promote creative freedom and expression becomes less about social connection

stagram dominates how we think and act. The quantification of Instagram, admitted or not, is a measure by which we assess social worth and if our lives and friendships are valuable and fulfilling, Grosser said about his reasoning for building demetricating social media.

Study after study shows that numerical feedback influences how we think, how we act. It's why teachers grade on a numerical scale of 0-100. It's why speed display radars are more successful at slowing speed than the posted speed limit. Numerical feedback loops are an effective tool for changing behavior, Thomas Goetz wrote in a deep-dive of feedback loops.

“Provide people with information about their actions in real time, then give them an opportunity to change those actions, pushing them toward better behaviors,” Goetz said in the deep-dive article.

Dictionary

Search for a word

“ caitlyn bland

/northwest student/

SENIOR

you see your own problems and things you're going through, and then you see everybody else's best picture-perfect things, and you think that's what their life consists of 24/7.”

Translations, word origin, and more definitions

In 2018, 37% of U.S. adults said they actively use Instagram. But, Instagram is more popular amongst 18-24 year-olds, with 75% using Instagram, according to the Pew Research Center.

Bland said over the years, she has used social media less and less. Partly because life got busy and she couldn't dedicate the time anymore. But mostly because she noticed how much of her free time she was allowing social media to consume.

“I realized that I wasn't getting enough real rest,” Bland said. “So I had to ask, ‘How can I help myself?’”

To help herself, Bland unin-

In search of that balance, Bland has set restrictions for social media on her iPhone. She can't access social platforms before 11 a.m. She has an hour and a half time limit set. Sometimes, though, when her hour and half of social media time is up for the day, Bland will hit “one more minute” or “15 more minutes,” similar to snoozing an alarm. But the time limit isn't really the point. It's being cognitive of where her screen time is spent, allowing more awareness around mindlessly scrolling.

“It's an instinctual time filler. It's like an addiction,” Bland said. “You're so used to having your phone.”

and more about social comparison, Bland said.

“You see your own problems and things you're going through, and then you see everybody else's best picture-perfect things, and you think that's what their life consists of 24/7,” Bland said.

Before the idea of private likes became a conversation, artist and developer Benjamin Grosser created demetricating browser extensions for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, removing all numbers from the social media platforms. No like counts. No follower counts. No comment counts. No timestamps. The presence of metrics on In-

“Action, information, reaction.”

It's still too soon to definitively say whether or not demetricating social media, or implementing private likes across the board will make people feel better about using Instagram. But social media with the numbers looks more like a competition and less like socialization.

“It is ironic, but perhaps not surprising, that reducing social media, which promised to help us connect with others, actually helps people feel less lonely and depressed,” lead researcher that monitored students use of social media at the University of Pennsylvania said of her findings.

Goooooooooooooogle

Open Mic Night makes 2020 debut

SARA ROBKE
A&E Reporter I @NWM_AE

"Anyone heard of Bob Dylan?" asked Mike Mattock, a counselor from the Wellness Center, as he strummed his guitar in the J.W. Jones Student Union. "This is an old song of his."

Mattock's version of Bob Dylan marked the first Open Mic Night of the spring semester Jan. 15. Open Mic Night is open to students once a month from 7-9 p.m. in the Union in the Living Room. Sign-up is not required in order to participate.

Open Mic is a free event where students can come express themselves in a positive atmosphere. Aidan Calfee, a junior and a regular at Open Mic Night, said the experience and welcoming atmosphere during the event has helped him develop his skills as a performer.

"It's a nice, friendly environment," Calfee said. "It's a good place to show expression and a good chance to get confidence."

Calfee has been going to Open Mic since December 2018. Having friends who played and performed there, he was eventually encouraged to show his skills.

"The first time I got up there I was shaking," he said.

Since then, Calfee has been performing stand-up comedy, while dabbling in singing and playing guitar. Calfee said that he does comedy simply because he loves it.

"I do jokes — it's made me build confidence in speaking," Calfee said. "I love laughing, and I've always joked around. It's a natural thing."

Even though Open Mic Night has helped build his confidence, Calfee can become uneasy before and after a performance.

"I still get nervous, but it's not bad," he said. "The nervousness subsides after a while."

Mattock, who both sings and



MADI NOLTE | NW MISSOURIAN

The fireplace and stone mantle on the second floor of the J.W. Jones Student Union provide a cozy backdrop as Wellness Services Counselor Mike Mattock performs Bob Dylan's "Don't Think Twice, It's Alright," during the first Open Mic Night of the semester on Jan. 15.

plays guitar, also organizes Open Mic Nights. He said that anybody can come, but it is mostly for college students.

"One time we had a professor come in and play on the piano," Mattock said.

In order to set up for Open Mic Night, Mattock calls Mark Hendrix, the University Events scheduling coordinator. Mattock tells Hendrix the supplies that are needed for Open Mic Night, and Hend-

drix sets it up.

After being set up, it doesn't take long for the room to fill.

"We have had up to 50 people watching open mic, and about 15 to 20 people perform," Mattock said.

Of those people who have performed was a woman who, at first, watched the performers during an Open Mic Night a couple of months ago.

"She sat in the back for an hour and a half while people went on to perform," Mattock said. "She wrote

a poem in that span of time about the different acts and performers called 'Open Mic Night.'

Mattock said that not everyone who performs needs to be involved with choir, or any other activities.

"It's their chance to express themselves," Mattock said. "It allows them to say, 'this is me.'"

Both Mattock and Calfee agree that the people who watch and perform Open Mic Night not only create a community, but also form a good place for sharing and express-

ing creativity.

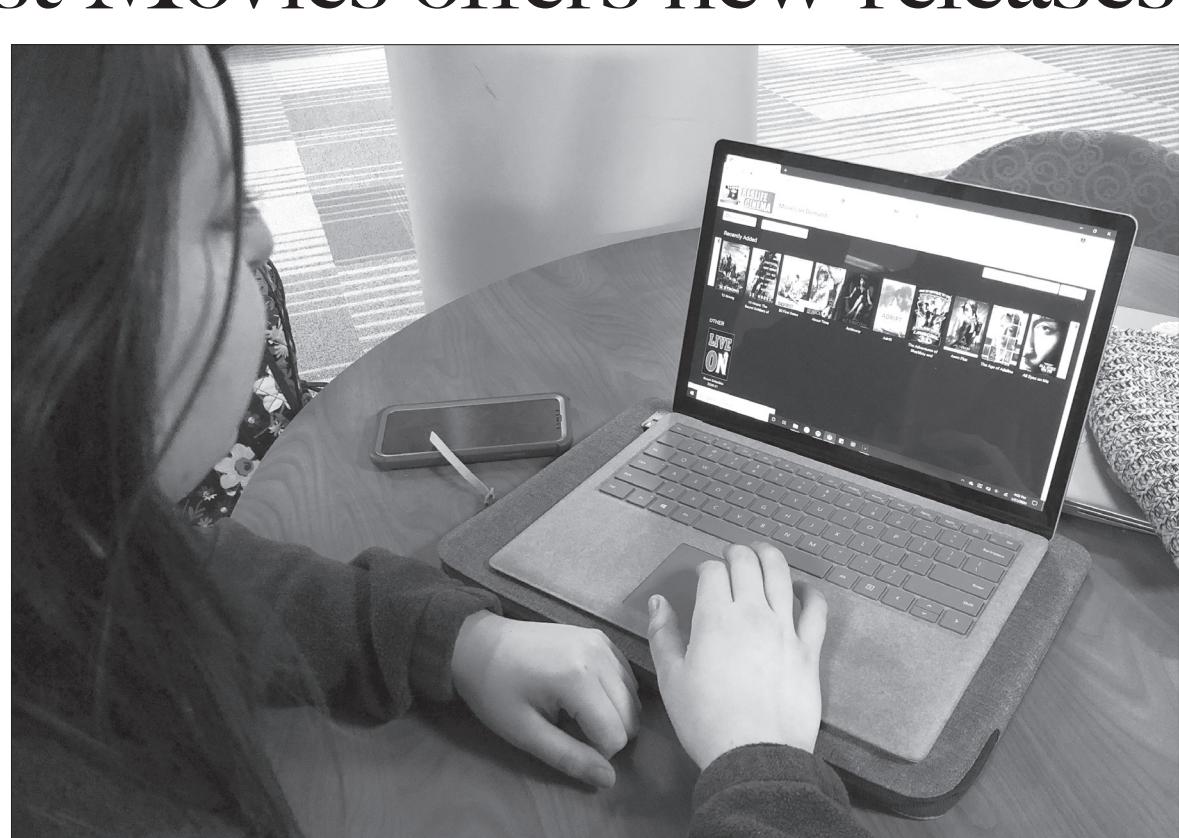
"Open Mic Night is a good avenue to showcase the things that you are passionate about," Calfee said.

"People are friendly, energetic, enthusiastic, and it's a good time."

"You see people evolve in confidence," Mattock said. "It's one of the best things I've been associated with in all my years here."

The next Open Mic Night is scheduled for Feb. 12.

THE STROLLER:
Your
Bearcat
wants
to loiter



MADI GLASS | NW MISSOURIAN

Students can access Northwest Movies as for free when on campus. There are several options available that are not shown on other movie subscription services, and students can vote for movies they want to see in the next month.

It may seem like it's only for students living on campus, but it's also a convenient amenity for students living off-campus. Off-campus students

can access Northwest Movies when they have a couple of hours between classes. For both on-campus and off-campus students, it's an amenity that can give a much needed break after hours of studying in the library.

"When I have long study session, I like to turn on Northwest Movies as it gives me a break from

the stress of homework," Platt said.

The service is also used by resident assistants when they want to host a movie night social. It's a way that they can entertain their residents without having to spend money.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
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"Pulling for Northwest Missouri for over 54 years."

It makes sense, I guess, that the lobby at the McDonald's in town closes at 11 p.m. And the fact that Taco Bell shuts its doors at 10 p.m. is alright, too, but it sure feels a little early.

But now HyVee closes from 1-5 a.m. and the Walmart in town does, too. Separately, these are all perfectly logical choices made by businesses who don't want to staff an overnight crew to deal with mostly no one other than probably-drunk college students.

Combined, though, all these businesses closing their doors before bedtime is an outrage, a scandal — an affront to human rights. Where am I supposed to loiter in the middle of the night if not the lobbies of low-brow fast-food chains or the dairy sections of national grocery stores?

It's not like I can have my SafeRide driver take me through the drive-thru, which is a crock in its own right. And I've yet to meet a designated driver willing to take me to St. Joseph, Missouri. And I guess there's always Senor Burrito for a late-night weekend option, but if I'm drunk leaving Molly's alone on a Friday, that's probably enough disappointment for one night.

And what about on weeknights, when I'm just laying in bed awake thinking about Patrick Mahomes? It's not like I can just put those thoughts on hold.

Anyway. Loitering in the dorms, surrounded by resident assistants who take their job a little too seriously, isn't much of an option. Developing healthy sleep habits is a non-starter. I have no intention to make good choices, I really just want a local business to enable some poor ones.

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missouri. Submit a Stroller to northwestmissourian@gmail.com

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JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN

Northwest women's basketball freshman forward Paityn Rau lines up to attempt a free throw in the Bearcats' 52-37 win over Florida Southern Nov. 29. Rau started every game before her injury against Missouri Western Jan. 18.

MIAA

CONTINUED FROM A12

In the last two weeks, the Bearcats have survived single-point contests with Western and Washburn and a 15-point game against Emporia State. Utilizing seven players — and six players in their Kansas tour — the Bearcats have been stretched thin and pushed to the brink of defeat, but they haven't been beaten since the match-up with Central, their only loss in more than 20 months.

"Yeah, they're tough kids," McCollum said of his players. "I mean, they're tough. You're gonna have to beat us. Like, it's one of those deals that we're gonna fight. That's not my concern whatsoever, it's now, can I fight with a sense of that kind of killer mentality, that chip-

on-the-shoulder stuff, that we had last year?"

Despite Northwest's continued winning, McCollum has insisted that the team needs to improve, repeating it after the team's win over Western and again at Northwest Athletics' weekly media luncheon Jan. 12. The offense, McCollum said, has to get better.

The path ahead for Northwest, a continued trek through the MIAA, isn't getting any easier. The Bearcats will host Nebraska-Kearney (12-5, 6-2 MIAA) Jan. 23 and Fort Hays State (7-9, 1-7 MIAA) Jan. 25.

Kearney, in particular, sits at third in the conference standings, trailing Missouri Southern (14-3, 7-1 MIAA) and Northwest. With a win, the Bearcats would move into first place. With a loss, they could fall as far as fourth.

INJURIES
CONTINUED FROM A12

"I think it'd be huge if we could come in here and get one or get them both," Meyer said. "Obviously, we're one game at a time but it would be huge for us. We've been in games, we've talked about Central Missouri on the road — had a lead at halftime. Emporia — we're down three with five minutes left to go. We've been in games against really good teams, even on the road. To be able to get over the hump in a game against a really good team would be huge for us."

The message, despite coming from Meyer at the top, has trickled down to the players, Hayward said.

"We've been competing with really good teams, and that's exciting for us and gives us a lot of confidence," Hayward added. "It's never like, 'Oh man, we're playing a top-25 team.' It's like, 'Oh, we're playing a top-25 team; we know we can compete, so let's compete.'"

The opportunities ahead for Northwest provide a chance to snap the skid, one of its kind this season. It allows the Bearcats, who sit at ninth in the conference, to improve their record in the MIAA. And despite the metaphorical handcuffs that both injuries leave the team with, Northwest isn't planning to waiver.

"We have confidence in every single person on our team, whether you're the ninth-man or you're a starter," Coleman said. "So I think we can overcome pretty much anything as long as we just believe in each other."

McCollum said his focus was solely on the upcoming matchup with the Lopers, preparing schematically for a Kearney gameplan that will likely show up differently Jan. 23 in Bearcat Arena than it did through weeks of game film.

That's how it is for the team that has won the MIAA six years in a row, preparing for a game more akin to the Super Bowl for Kearney than a mid-January Division II men's basketball matchup, preparing for the Lopers' best shot.

"(Kearney is) as hot as any team in the conference — even country, for that matter," McCollum said. "As far as what I expect, you know, we'll figure it out during the game, usually, because they'll probably change their offense and their defense. And so, we'll just adjust to it and be ready for it."

Wrestling drops both matches in triangular duel

ROMAN METCALF
Sports Reporter | @roman_metcalf87

When taking the mats for the second time in front of the home crowd in the 2019-20 season, Maryville wrestling was looking to pick up wins in its Jan. 16 triangular against Sabetha and Falls City.

To begin the duel against the Bluejays from Sabetha, the 'Hounds got off to a rough start. Due to a vast amount of open weight classes, Maryville found itself forfeiting those matches to the Jays, leaving a 24-6 deficit for Maryville.

The 6 points came from Kade Wilmes. The Jays returned a few points to the Spoofhounds, letting an open weight class secure Wilmes, the junior, a win.

The deficit, Maryville coach Dallas Barrett said, was due to the absence of numerous wrestlers.

"I mean, you have nights like tonight where you've got five different kids out," Barrett said. "It's like your chances of winning your duel is next-to-none."

A comeback happened after the sure win from Wilmes. It was set up by sophomore Drew Spire, who wrestled the first real match of the night for Maryville five matches into the duel. For Spire, who found himself ahead by 7 points at the end of the first period, went on to be victorious by pin in the second.

The comeback was starting to be mounted — until it wasn't.

Junior Connor Weiss, a previous state-qualifier, wasn't able to get it done in his match. Weiss led early in the first but found himself fighting on his stomach for nearly all of the second round. Despite surviving the second, Weiss was eventually pinned in the third.

Along with Weiss heading back to the bench, went the hopes of a Maryville win over Sabetha. And with both of those, went the expectations that Weiss had of himself.

"Well, what I expected of myself is already gone," Weiss said. "I was trying to get under three losses, but

UP NEXT

MHS @ MEC Tournament
10 a.m. Jan. 25
St. Joseph, Mo

that's gone."

Maryville forfeited 36 points in a duel it lost by 21. Mathematically, a win was impossible for the Spoofhounds, leaving Maryville with a 45-24 loss to Sabetha.

On the heels of the loss to the Jays, the 'Hounds faced Falls City. For Maryville, it was much of the same story as the first duel, resulting in forfeiting numerous matches.

The deficit, for Maryville, wasn't as large as it was against Sabetha. Falls City took a 6-point advantage, one that dissipated when Wilmes picked up his second win of the night. Actually wrestling in the second duel, he contributed 6 points via a pin.

Weiss, trying to avenge his earlier loss, failed to find a win. The Maryville comeback, one that seemed more realistic than the first, resulted in the same. The loss from Weiss, paired with other things, left the Spoofhounds with a 36-30 loss to the Tigers.

The matches for Weiss, Barrett said, were rather uncharacteristic. It is, in part, due to losing what type of wrestler he is, Barrett said.

"He just needs to remember who he is," Barrett said. "He knows what to do. He's just gotta get over his frustration and remember who he is."

The losses, collectively, leave Maryville with zero wins and four losses in head-to-head duels. The pieces, Weiss said, are in place. With that, comes room for improvement, Weiss added.

"I mean, there's definitely room for improvement," Weiss said. "We've learned our mistakes already, and we can build on those and work together as a team to make it happen."

Fresh face leads Maryville wrestling

ROMAN METCALF
Sports Reporter | @roman_metcalf87



When the Maryville wrestling team hit the mat for the first time this season, they had a fresh face at the helm.

To fill the void at the head coaching position, former assistant coach Dallas Barrett received a promotion.

Barrett's promotion was in response to the departure of head coach Kody Koster and assistant coach Riley Klein. Koster and Klein resigned from coaching duties near the end of the 2018-19 wrestling season for a violation of school rules.

Despite the lack of head coaching experience, Barrett isn't new to the wrestling picture. He was a state-qualifying wrestler before graduating from Tarkio High School in May 2006. Barrett, who is a former Bearcat, wrestled for the Bearcat Club wrestling team while he attended Northwest.

Barrett later went on and fought in-and-out of the amateur and professional ranks of Mixed Martial Arts, Barrett's first fight was in 2009, an amateur duel in which he lost. His most recent, and last, fight came in 2014, where Barrett also lost due to a rear-naked choke.

Assuming full responsibility for the program, Barrett brings in a style of wrestling that differs from the past and inherits a program full of well-rounded wrestlers, Barrett said.

"Well, I have brought in a new and different style of wrestling than they are used to," Barrett said. "I mean, they are all well-coached prior to me getting here. They all had a great start before I got here."

Barrett said he has a great base of wrestlers and that he has tried to add options to those wrestlers' arsenal.

"I've had a great base to work with, and I have just tried to add options of different techniques and looks," Barrett said. "I've also tried to add ways of looking at things differently. I've also tried to add



MADI NOLTE | NW MISSOURIAN

Head coach Dallas Barrett, in his first season leading the Spoofhound wrestling teams, talks with junior Keiren Watkins on his performance before entering Round 2 of his match at home Jan. 16.

different workouts and just trying to get them to do things that I like to do."

Behind wrestlers Connor Weiss, Gavin Grey and Jeff Stooksbury, comes inexperience that could, at times, be detrimental to the 'Hounds. Despite that, Barrett said, the work ethic is there.

The team, showing its youth,

consist of 14 underclassmen and three seniors.

"This team has to keep their motors going, gotta look for those re-shots and look for those things," Barrett said. "They just gotta get a little quicker and fix the little things."

With Barrett coming in, assistant coach Howard Dumke said the

youth program has seen a significant rise in numbers.

Dumke had high praise for the new coach of the 'Hounds' wrestling program.

"With coach Barrett coming in, our youth wrestling club numbers are up between 50 and 60 more kids," Dumke said.

With the hiring of Barrett, Dum-

ke said, the wrestlers have welcomed him, and his experience, with open arms.

"The kids have really been accepting of coach Barrett and what he brings to the table from his wrestling experience and background," Dumke said. "Coach has made these wrestlers better leaders and has built a culture among the wrestlers."



RACHEL ADAMSON | NW MISSOURIAN

Maryville boys basketball senior guard Tylan Perry fights through defenders in Maryville's 70-53 win over Falls City (Nebraska) Jan. 16. The Spoofhounds are looking to find success in the MEC, where they've struggled to this point in the season. Maryville will get a chance to do that Jan. 24, which is Senior Night.

Back on track:

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers



The Maryville boys basketball team found itself with a much-needed break from the rough competition the MEC provides as it faced Falls City (Nebraska) Jan. 16. They came out on top 70-53.

The Tigers (6-7) came into Maryville (2-7) looking to secure the win that would put them above .500. However, the Spoofhounds caught the coveted hot shooting hand.

The first two quarters saw a battle where one team couldn't get the advantage. The Spoofhounds looked like they were ready to run away with the game when they built a quick 7-2 lead in the first quarter, but the Tigers built a run of their own and finished only trailing 17-11 at the end of the quarter.

Falls City's sophomore Kade Bredeemeier knew his team needed help as their shooting struggles started to show, and he led the way with 20 points, 15 of those coming from behind the arc. The Tigers cut the Spoofhounds lead even more, and Maryville carried a slim 35-32 lead heading into halftime.

Maryville coach Matt Stoecklein knew the Spoofhounds needed to keep the pressure applied to force shooting woes for Fall City.

The Spoofhounds (3-7) have had trouble shooting and finishing games on top in the scoreboard. Matt Stoecklein made that a point of emphasis in the practice before the game.

"We have been working on moving the ball side to side more and taking better shots," Matt Stoecklein said. "Our practice the day before was devoted to only offense and taking better shots."

Freshman guard Caden Stoecklein found energy not used in previous games to push Maryville substantially ahead.

Caden Stoecklein came out of the half with 7 of the 15 points scored by the Spoofhounds in the third quarter and had the same amount of points the Tigers put up in that same quarter. Caden Stoecklein finished with 23 points, and Matt Stoecklein was ecstatic to see his son becoming more comfortable shooting the ball as each game comes along.

"The freshman Caden Stoecklein has also really been coming on lately on offense and as one of the defenders that has to play the other team's best players," Matt Stoecklein said.

The ball movement shown in the game allowed for senior Tate Oglesby to find other scoring

threats, which hasn't been as big of a focus in past games this season. Junior Ben Walker was one of three players in double digits finishing with 14 points. Oglesby finished with 19 points. Matt Stoecklein was most impressed with Oglesby's performance.

"Tate trusted his teammates and distributed the ball more and because of that we got really good looks and a more evenly distributed scoring," Matt Stoecklein said.

The scoring threats from Caden Stoecklein, Oglesby and Walker surged Maryville to a 50-39 score at the end of the third quarter, then 20 points in the fourth quarter to secure the win.

Maryville's defense, particularly in the second half, kept the Tigers from feeling like they could run away with the game. Aside from Bredeemeier that scored 20 and senior Mason Crawford who scored 13, nobody on the Tigers scored more than 8 points.

Maryville got to the line 27 times and made 19 of those free throws. The Spoofhounds also found themselves with a small number of turnovers. Turnovers have been shown to be a problem for the young Spoofhound team in past games.

The onslaught of scoring and the

Maryville boys snap losing skid in blowout

UP NEXT

MHS v Savannah
7:30 p.m. Jan. 24
'Hound Pound

pressure of the defense gave light to Maryville's most efficient game thus far. Everything seemed to click for the Spoofhounds, and they're hoping to keep this momentum bearing that they'll be back in the tough competition of the MEC shortly.

"We are improving by leaps and bounds but still need to be able to put a complete game together from beginning to end," Matt Stoecklein said.

To Matt Stoecklein, the future success of the Spoofhounds comes from all players, and everyone is making the correct strides thus far. The confidence in his players is high heading into the Jan. 28 matchup with Mid Buchanan in Faukett, Missouri.

"The boys are starting to play together for the first time and it shows on the court," Matt Stoecklein said. "Ben Walker and Marc Gustafson have been improving in the post and are starting to become very impactful in the games. Trey Houchin has contributed in the last two games either from behind the line or passing."

Spoofhounds utilize time off to rest

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @Curly_corbs



Maryville girls basketball found redemption after losing a close one in the 'Hound Pound to East Buchanan Jan. 14. A rescheduled matchup against the Tigers of Falls City proved to be what Maryville needed to regain its confidence.

Coach Quentin Albrecht said that the girls were anxious about playing a highly-ranked team in East Buchanan, and that affected their performance. However, he emphasized the idea of importance.

"It's not important how many games you win in a row or what your state ranking is," Albrecht said. "It's important that you come out and take care of business one game at a time."

The Spoofhounds (12-2) did that as they dismantled Falls City (Nebraska) 66-35 Jan. 16. In stark contrast to the game against East Buchanan, the offense got off to a strong start. Freshman guard Anastyn Petton and freshman forward Rylee Viethaler helped lift the 'Hounds to a 27-10 first-quarter lead.

"I think it's important anytime you come off a loss, you put your best foot forward, and we really did that," Albrecht said.

After the East Buchanan game, Albrecht wanted to see the girls be a little more aggressive offensively and squeeze as much effort out of each movement on the court. The competitive edge needed to be there for the Spoofhounds.

"Move quicker and with more purpose," Albrecht said. "We talked to them about attacking the space a little bit better, be a little bit more aggressive to the basket and looking for your shot a little more."

The win against Falls City means



RACHEL ADAMSON | NW MISSOURIAN

Maryville has yet to lose consecutive games this season. Maryville had much more participation in terms of scoring against the Tigers, which proved to be what the 'Hounds need in order to stay in their winning ways.

Mentally preparing for a basketball game is just as important to Albrecht as physically preparing for one. The Maryville coach canceled practice in lieu of school also closing in order to give the team a bit more time to relax. The 'Hounds were planning to practice on the two days leading up to their Jan. 21 matchup. That matchup, due to inclement weather, was canceled, leaving the girls with ex-

tra days to recover.

Albrecht, enjoying his time off as well, spent a day with his wife at the Northwest basketball double-header against Missouri Western Jan. 18. While expressing his admiration for Northwest women's basketball head coach Austin Meyer, he said he enjoys the atmosphere of Bearcat basketball.

"I'm a big fan of (Meyer); I always pick up a few things from him," Albrecht said. "I really enjoy watching what coach Meyer does with his team, and Bearcat basketball is such a fun experience that we like to soak it in as much as we can."

In the wake of Albrecht's time

UP NEXT

MHS @ LeBlond
6:45 p.m. Jan. 23
St. Joseph, Mo.

off, along with the girls', he'll have to prepare for the Spoofhounds' next matchup. The Spoofhounds, Albrecht said, aren't worried about a winning streak. Instead, he added, they're worried about the next game.

"We're just trying to take it one game at a time, business as usual approach," Albrecht said. "We're going to polish some of those things that need polished."

Save high school hoops, adopt a shot clock

NATHAN ENGLISH
Sports Columnist
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High school basketball needs a shot clock. There is a 19-second video on Twitter that practically makes my argument for me, but since you're not all on Twitter, I'll just write a column to make my case instead.

The video is of a Kansas high school basketball game, the teams are inconsequential. What matters is that for 19 seconds in the fourth quarter of a game, an acceptable strategy in high school basketball is to hold the ball at half court and do nothing.

Basketball, which is traditionally a sport with fast-paced action, high-flying moments and numerous intricacies, has been whittled down to standing at half court and holding the ball to not actually have to play the game. A shot clock in high school would not only force teams to play the sport but would also improve game quality, save everyone time, including whoever is making popcorn that night, and increase the entertainment value of the sport.

The shot clock has been a part of basketball since 1954 when it was first introduced in the NBA. The NBA implemented the shot clock because basketball was, simply put, becoming really boring. The lowest-scoring NBA game ever ended with a score of 19-18, in which the Fort Wayne Pistons triumphed over the Minneapolis Lakers in 1950. Most middle school games have had higher point totals. So, the NBA eventually made a change to increase excitement and pace of play.

The problem is high school basketball isn't the NBA. Maryville girls basketball coach Quentin Albrecht does not support the idea of a shot clock in high school, partially for that reason.

"I don't believe that high school has to mirror college; I don't believe college has to mirror the NBA," Albrecht said. "I think at each level, you are looking at a different type of athlete."

I completely understand Albrecht's argument but respectfully disagree. High school sports, at their core, are meant to teach leadership and other important values that people will carry for the rest of their lives.

They can also be a way for teenagers to help pay for college, and something like implementing a shot clock could help give the skills they need to compete at the next level.

Maryville boys' basketball coach Matt Stoecklein is in support of a shot clock because of player development.

"I think it would help basketball," Stoecklein said. "It helps kids make decisions and become a little bit better smarter basketball player."

Struggle forces growth, this is just as true in sports as it is in life and the struggle to make smart decisions at a higher pace would, overall, increase player's basketball IQ.

Albrecht added that shot clocks would limit strategy for teams with less talent. Teams that are not as star-studded as others are able to use long stretches of the clock in an attempt to prevent the other team from scoring. The teams that milk the clock would have to adopt a different play style with the use of the shot clock, much like teams did with the implementation of the three-point line.

Basketball is an evolving sport, and it will always need to change and a shot clock in high school is just the next step.

Parity will always be an issue in high school basketball because of the nature of high school athletics.

"With college and pros, you can pick your team in high school you just have who you have," Stoecklein said.

The shot clock in high school would increase entertainment, development and overall enjoyment of the game. It only makes sense to catch up to the curve that the sport is already nearly 60 years behind on.

THIS IS IT, CHIEF



Chiefs earn chance at Super Bowl after 50-year drought

JON WALKER
Sports Editor
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Hey there, Chiefs fan. If you've been living under a rock, or just now hopping on the bandwagon, then you might be unaware that the Kansas City Chiefs, for the first time in a half-century, are going to the Super Bowl.

It's not my job to judge you when you became a Chiefs fan. Whether it be when Elvis Grbac was trying to make things happen or Tyler Thigpen doing whatever he did, I feel for you, that's all I'm saying. Or perhaps if you were a part of the Alex Smith Fan Club (I hope that's an actual thing), or if the only quarterback that you've ever known is Patrick Mahomes, I'm here to say: Congrats.

As a Denver Broncos fan, I have no dog in this fight, Super Bowl LIV, that is. I know plenty of people that do, however. I was fortunate enough, thanks to my sister and brother-in-law, to attend the AFC Championship game against the Titans. That, I might add, is one of the coolest experiences that I've been a part of.

I was there to witness Mahomes' 27-yard scramble for a touchdown. The Tyrann Mathieu hit stick on Corey Davis. The dagger that oh so delicately dropped into the hands of Sammy Watkins.

Those moments, and a whole season worth of moments prior to



Chiefs' quarterback Patrick Mahomes runs out of the tunnel during player introductions prior to the AFC Championship game Jan. 19 at Arrowhead Stadium. The Chiefs defeated the Titans 35-24 to earn a trip to Super Bowl LIV.

the hoisting of the Lamar Hunt Trophy, lifted a weight that had sat on top of the organization, fan base and city, for years.

A win, with under two minutes left and an 11-point lead, was sure.

The dream that everybody in the organization had pictured, for what probably feels like forever, came to fruition once Frank Clark knocked down Ryan Tannehill on the final fourth down. That play, in that par-

ticular moment, with a trip to the big time on the line, meant more to the city and organization than the other 49 years combined since beating the Vikings in Super Bowl IV.

Chiefs fans live all over the

country — actually, all over the world. Whether it be the state of Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Maine or California, there's a state that Chiefs fans have resided in for the past 50 years: despair.

Every quarterback struggle, every offside penalty, every Tom Brady scoring drive, those are all washed away. Those moments, for Chiefs fans, are what you see through a jaded lens. But now, with 2020 vision, if you will, there's one sight still in mind: hoisting the Lombardi Trophy.

With that being said, do just that. Go conquer that team from California. If you're reading this, you more than likely have no effect on the outcome of a game that will be played in Miami. But don't let your confidence, your hope and your support waiver if the big game appears to be a little too big for the Chiefs at first.

I would love nothing more for lifelong fans to experience a win on the grandest stage of them all. It's something that everybody should experience in their lifetime. This opportunity, for players, coaches and fans, is truly once in a lifetime — don't lose sight of that.

It's not every day that you get to wake up and find your team AFC Champions. When you woke up Jan. 20, that was the case. Cherish it. Love it. Relish it.

One thing that I'll leave you with, from a sincere fan of your division rival: How about those Chiefs?

Congrats, Kansas City. Won, not done. This is it, now bring it home.

Indoor track and field readies for semester debut

NATHAN ENGLISH
Sports Reporter | @ThananEnglish



Weather conditions prevented the Northwest track and field team from taking the trip to the Graduate Classic Jan. 16-17 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The significance of the meet was for athletes, particularly those running in 200-meter and 400-meter races and relays, to get time on a 200-meter bank track, which differs from the 300-meter flat track at Hughes Fieldhouse. The NCAA Division II Indoor Track and Field National Championships will be run in Birmingham, Alabama, on a bank track that is nearly identical to the one the Bearcats didn't get to run on.

Coach Brandon Masters was disappointed the team couldn't make the trip but said they still got better, which is the goal. The team had a fantastic workout, Masters said, in place of attending the meet.

"We got better," Masters said. "We still probably got a better workout than going to the meet itself."

Senior Jordan Hammond and sophomore Omar Austin are among the athletes who were slated to compete at the Graduate Classic. Hammond and Austin competed at

nationals last year, with Hammond earning First Team All-American honors. Both were hoping to get more time in on a bank track to prepare for this year's championship.

Austin has only run on a bank track once, his freshman season. The lack of experience on the style of track, Austin said, didn't play in his favor. Despite the inexperience, or bad experience for that matter, he's not looking for that to lower the expectation that he holds himself to.

"I didn't do my best," Austin said. "I ain't makin' no excuses."

Austin added that bank tracks force him to run in a different style and be less conservative while running.

"On a 200-meter bank, you have to give your all," Austin said. "If anything, I like it because it's going to push me to give my all."

Hammond said the bank track does change races for athletes, especially those in 200-meter and 400-meter races.

"Getting used to being able to control your body on a track like that makes a big difference," Hammond said.

The next meet for the Bearcats will be a home meet Jan. 24-25 in Hughes Fieldhouse. Hammond and Austin are both competing in the home meet. Austin is coming off

a slight groin injury that was troubling him for a little over a week, but says he is good to go for the rest of the year.

"I'm not going to let that hold me back," Austin said about the groin injury.

This will be the second straight home meet for the team, leaving a 48-day break from competition for the athletes due to holiday break and the cancellation of the Graduate Classic. Austin and Hammond were in agreement on the effect that competing at home in front of the Bearcat faithful can have on an athlete.

"I always get that burst of energy," Austin said. "It's like you're in your house, you just do what you wanna do."

"It gives you a lot more adrenaline to perform your best in front of all the Bearcats," Hammond added.

Masters is looking at the upcoming home meet and other meets before conference championships as a learning opportunity; he isn't as concerned with results as he is with experience in competition.

"I choose to make most of these meets — a high-level practice," Masters said. "It's learning how to compete, not necessarily going for

big marks."

Hammond echoed Masters' sentiment on the early meet competition.

"It doesn't matter 'til it counts," Hammond said. "We are either trying to win conference championships or trying to be an All-American, anything before that is trying to prepare you for that moment."

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“The kids play completely different”

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | [@andrewwegley](#)



Eighteen days into the new year and seven games into this season's conference slate, Northwest men's basketball coach Ben McCollum summed up the strength of the MIAA and the dual-edged sword that has come to define his program.

In the aftermath of Northwest's 65-56 win over Missouri Western Jan. 18, the latest in a series of physical, hard-fought matchups for the Bearcats (16-1, 6-1 MIAA), McCollum sat alone in a converted classroom on the second floor of Lamkin Activity Center, across the hall from Bearcat Arena, and described the familiar gauntlet his team is running in a way that made it sound brand new.

“It's a strange year,” McCollum said. “You know, I think the shots that we're — we took shots last year. I don't know that I've ever seen anything like this. I mean it is the Super Bowl every time we come out.”

The trend McCollum described has been a constant for the No. 2 Bearcats for much of the last four seasons — they've been a top-ranked team in Division II for the duration of that stretch, accumulating a 116-6 record since the start of the 2016-17 campaign. The nature of Northwest's recent standing within the ranks of Division II has brought with it a perpetual target on the team's back.

That's the reality in which Northwest has played its games for the last four years. But this year, McCollum said, the urgency in the Bearcats' opponents seems heightened, and with it, the physicality and focus they bring to the floor against Northwest.

“Yeah, I would say it's different this year,” junior forward Ryan Hawkins said. “Every year is different; every game is different. I do think teams are playing a little bit harder against us. They're trying to take us out of what we do. And so we've just got to make sure we stick to what we do best.”

The phenomenon was on display in Northwest's early slate of conference games at the start of the new year, which saw the Bearcats win relatively close matchups over Northeastern State Jan. 4 and Rogers State Jan. 6 by scores of 76-65 and 74-55, respectively.

But the occurrence was perhaps best depicted in Northwest's 73-68 back-and-forth win over Washburn Jan. 11, one in which McCollum utilized six players and artic-

Coach Ben McCollum touches on 'Cats' unique role in MIAA amid early stretch of hard-fought conference matchups



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest coach Ben McCollum walks towards the locker room at halftime of the Bearcats' 76-65 win over Northeastern State Jan. 4. McCollum has utilized seven players in four of Northwest's last five games due to injuries.

ulated the toughness of the conference matchups on the Bearcat Radio Network in the aftermath of the 5-point victory in Topeka, Kansas.

“We're taking some serious shots right now, too,” McCollum told KXCV's John Coffey Jan. 11. “I mean, some serious shots. They are playing their best basketball every time they play against us. I mean, it is ridiculous. ... It's just

how it is when you're as highly ranked as we are.”

The case helps depict the parable of the MIAA and Northwest's place within the conference. It provides context for close wins over the conference's mid-level teams. It poses further challenges to a team trying to navigate an already-challenging league schedule. But, McCollum said, it does not serve as

an excuse.

“Find their best instances, and that's what you prepare for,” McCollum said Jan. 14. “You don't sit there and hope that they are gonna play bad. You hope that they play their best and that you can beat their best. ... That's what we want. If we can beat you, we can beat you. If not, we can't. And that's just how it is.”

Women look to overcome injuries to snap losing skid

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | [@ByJonWalker](#)



On the heels of a three-game skid, Northwest women's basketball is looking to avoid facing a losing record when it plays host to No. 10 Fort Hays and Nebraska Kearney Jan. 23 and Jan. 25, respectively.

The last three games for the Bearcats (8-8, 3-5 MIAA) have been far from ideal. The three losses on the scoreboard have been accompanied by two that, in the long term, could be costly for the remainder of the season.

It was in the Jan. 9 loss to No. 16 Emporia State when junior Kendey Eaton exited the game with an injury, one that has left the guard on the bench since that moment.

“I mean, it's Kendey Eaton,” senior guard Mallory McConkey said after the Jan. 18 loss to Missouri Western. “When she's not in the game — she's gonna help us whenever she can come back — but she's a great player so it's go-

ing to hurt us.”

The presence of Eaton, or lack thereof, is something that has forced the offense to adapt. Before being injured, Eaton was contributing a team-high 14.6 points per contest. In addition, she contributed more than 25 minutes a game.

The notch in the lineup wasn't expected to get deeper — until freshman forward Paityn Rau joined Eaton in absence.

Rau's injury, one that came in the second quarter in the loss to Western, has left her, along with Eaton, with a day-to-day statuses. Despite possibly not having those two against Hays and Kearney, junior guard Zoie Hayward said, the Bearcats should be in good shape.

“Injuries are going to happen, but it's cool to know that we all just have each other's backs,” Hayward said. “And no matter what happens, we're gonna go play hard and do what we have to do to win.”

“With both of them out, it takes a toll on both ends of the court,” junior guard Kylie Coleman added.

UP NEXT

NW v Nebraska-Kearney
5:30 p.m. Jan. 23
Bearcat Arena

The depth of the toll that it takes will be put to the test when the availability of both players are questionable against Kearney Jan. 23. The Lopers (17-2, 6-2 MIAA) are in the midst of a five-game win streak. The streak has them sitting at a tie for third in the MIAA.

The tie, ironically, is with Hays (15-2, 6-2 MIAA). When the No. 16 Tigers come to Bearcat Arena Jan. 25, they'll be riding a nine-game win streak that dates back to Dec. 7. Finding at least one, or both, Northwest coach Austin Meyer said, could be another stand-out mark on the season that could prove to be the turning point of the program.

SEE INJURIES | A9



DAKOTA WEAVER | NW MISSOURIAN
Despite being injured during an intense game against Missouri Western senior Kendey Eaton keeps the bench alive during the second half of the basketball game Jan. 18.

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